

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FRASER COMMITTEE HOLDS SINGLE SESSION ON U.S.-
KOREA RELATIONS, MARCH 16

1. SUMMARY

MARCH 16 SESSION OF FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS WAS
DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO TESTIMONY BY FORMER EA/K DIRECTOR DONALD
RANARD. RANARD DID NOT GIVE OPENING STATEMENT. IN
RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS HE TOLD SUBCOMMITTEE HE DISAGREED
WITH CONCLUSIONS OF PROFESSOR LEDYARD'S MARCH 15 TESTIMONY,
PUT HIGH VALUE ON U.S. INTELLIGENCE REPORTS ABOUT KOREAN
LOBBYING, DESCRIBED HIS "FRUSTRATED" EFFORTS TO CORRECT
SITUATION, AND SUGGESTED THAT SUBCOMMITTEE CALL WIDE
RANGE OF STATE AND OTHER AGENCY WITNESSES TO PUT ENTIRE
KOREAN LOBBYING ISSUE ON PUBLIC RECORD.

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2. DISAGREEMENT WITH PROFESSOR LEDYARD

RANARD SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE RESPECTED PROFESSOR LEDYARD'S
SCHOLARSHIP HE COULD NOT AGREE WITH HIS CONCLUSIONS ABOUT
THE EFFECT ON KOREA OF THE SHOCKS GENERATED BY CHANGES
IN U.S. POLICY TOWARD ASIA. HE SAID THAT KOREAN REACTIONS
TO U.S. TROOP REDUCTIONS AND THE OPENING TO CHINA SHOULD

BE RELATED MORE TO PRESIDENT PARK'S POLITICAL AMBITIONS RATHER THAN TO SHOCK EFFECT ON KOREAN SOCIETY. IN RANARD'S VIEW, THE OPENING TO CHINA WAS THE MOST HOPEFUL DEVELOPMENT ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA IN MANY YEARS, YET IT WAS USED BY PRESIDENT PARK TO INCREASE HIS POLITICAL CONTROL. U.S. DECISION TO WITHDRAW TROOPS UNNERVED PARK, AND HE TRIED TO KEEP THE WITHDRAWAL DECISION FROM OTHER KOREANS FOR SOME TIME. SINCE A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. HAS ALWAYS BEEN ESSENTIAL CLAIM OF KOREAN LEADERSHIP, PARK SAW THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL DECISION AS DETRACTING FROM HIS IMAGE. HE FORESAW ELECTORAL DIFFICULTIES AND MOVED TO INSULATE HIMSELF FROM THE EXPECTED LOSS OF PRESTIGE. HIS OPPONENT, KIM TAE-CHUNG, ON OTHER HAND, PLANNED TO MAKE TROOP WITHDRAWAL A MAJOR ELECTION ISSUE.

3. VICE PRESIDENT AGNEW VISIT TO KOREA

AFTER AN EXCHANGE DESCRIBING RANARD'S ROLE IN THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT, FRASER ASKED WHY PRESIDENT PARK REPORTEDLY CONSIDERED THE VISIT UNSUCCESSFUL. RANARD REPLIED THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT WAS INEXPERIENCED IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND PRESIDENT PARK RAISED MANY ISSUES AGNEW NOT PREPARED TO HANDLE. THE MOOD IN CONGRESS AT THAT TIME FAVORED REDUCTIONS IN MILITARY EXPENDITURES AND SECRETARY OF DEFENSE LAIRD HAD SAID THAT KOREAN TROOP LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITHDRAWAL WOULD SAVE \$500 MILLION PER YEAR. IN ADDITION, AGNEW HAD TOLD THE PRESS THAT ALL U.S. TROOPS WOULD BE OUT OF KOREA WITHIN FIVE YEARS, WHICH GENERATED AN ANXIOUS CALL FROM THE KOREANS FOR REASSURANCES. IN AN ASIDE, RANARD SAID THAT DURING THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE 1971 TROOP WITHDRAWAL THERE HAD BEEN TALK ABOUT EVENTUALLY REDUCING U.S. FORCES IN KOREA TO AN ALL-PURPOSE BRIGADE OF 5,000 MEN; THIS, HE SAID, SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DISCUSSING CURRENT PLANS TO WITHDRAW GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA.

4. DEPARTMENT REACTIONS TO INTELLIGENCE REPORTS OF KOREAN LOBBYING

RANARD PUT HIGH VALUE ON INTELLIGENCE REPORTS ON KOREAN LOBBYING EFFORTS AND MEETINGS IN THE BLUE HOUSE HELD TO COORDINATE ROK EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE U.S. PUBLIC OPINION. HE DESCRIBED ACTIONS LEADING UP TO A JUSTICE DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF RADIO FREE ASIA (ROFA) AND TONGSUN PARK IN RELATION TO FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT. HE NOTED HIS REACTION OF "FRUSTRATION, INDIGNATION AND QUIET OUTRAGE" WHEN JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

CONCLUDED THAT THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO LABEL ROFA AS AN AGENT OF THE ROKG. RANARD SAID HE AGREED WITH

FRASER THAT JUSTICE HAD PAID INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO THE ROLE OF TONGSUN PARK AND THAT HE FELT AT THE TIME THAT THE DOOR WAS BEING CLOSED ON FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS. FRASER SAID THAT FROM WHAT THE SUBCOMMITTEE HAD BEEN ABLE TO FIND IN JUSTICE FILES (A CHECK OF ROFA RECORDS AND ONE INTERVIEW), RANARD WAS CORRECT ON THIS SCORE.

RANARD SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY HAD TOLD THE KOREAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON SEVERAL TIMES THAT THE EMBASSY ALONE SHOULD CONDUCT LOBBYING ACTIVITIES AND THAT TONGSUN PARK WAS A LIABILITY. FROM EMBASSY OFFICIALS' LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RESPONSE, RANARD SAID HE GAINED IMPRESSION THAT TONGSUN PARK HAD IMPORTANT CONTACTS IN KOREA AND THAT THE ISSUE WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE EMBASSY TO HANDLE. HE CITED CHONG IL-KWON VISIT TO THE U.S. IN 1970, WHEN TONGSUN PARK MET CHONG AT AIRPORT AND LATER ARRANGED MEETING FOR CHONG WITH SECDEF AFTER STATE HAD DECIDED SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE UNNECESSARY. RANARD SAID THAT FEELING IN THE DEPARTMENT WAS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD CARRY THE BURDEN WITH THE CONGRESS OF SUPPORTING THE MODERNIZATION PLAN AND OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS NECESSARY FOR KOREA'S DEFENSE AND NOT LET "INTERLOPERS" INTERFERE WITH THE U.S. LEGISLATIVE PROCESS. IT WAS THE HOPE OF DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS THAT THE BEST WAY TO SOLVE TONGSUN PARK PROBLEM WOULD BE TO "REMOVE HIM FROM THE SCENE." TO EFFECT THIS, AN INSTRUCTION WAS SENT TO AMBASSADOR PORTER WHO APPROACHED PRESIDENT PARK (NOT SPEAKER CHONG, AS AMBASSADOR RECALLED THE DAY BEFORE). THE REASON RANARD IS REASONABLY SURE OF THIS IS THAT AMBASSADOR PORTER RECOUNTED PRESIDENT'S REPLY: PRESIDENT PARK WAS SURPRISED THAT THE U.S.G. SHOULD HAVE MISGIVINGS ABOUT TONGSUN PARK, SINCE MANY CONGRESSMEN HAD TOLD HIM HOW EFFECTIVE HE HAD BEEN IN WASHINGTON.

5. MISCELLANY

RANARD MENTIONED CONGRESSMAN BROOMFIELD'S COMPLAINT TO EMBASSY SEOUL THAT TONGSUN PARK HAD OFFERED HIM \$1,000 (WHICH HE HAD REFUSED IN FRONT OF HIS STAFF), AND BROOMFIELD'S ALLEGATION THAT TONGSUN PARK HAD OFFERED CASH TO OTHER CONGRESSMEN IN CONNECTION WITH ELECTION EXPENSES. RANARD THOUGHT CASH HAD BEEN OFFERED IN U.S. ASKED BY FRASER FOR HIS VIEWS ON TONGSUN PARK'S RELATIONS WITH SEVERAL KOREANS, RANARD SAID THAT HE FELT AMBASSADOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KIM TONG-CHO DID NOT LIKE TONGSUN PARK, AND AS AN EXPERIENCED DIPLOMAT FOUND HIM AN INTERLOPER AND SOMETHING OF A BUFFOON. RANARD SAID HE THOUGHT IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT TONGSUN PARK HAD EVER BEEN SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED TO HEAD LOBBYING EFFORT.

6. CONCLUSION OF SESSION

AFTER LAST OF PREPARED QUESTIONS, CONGRESSMAN FRASER THANKED MR. RANARD, STATING THAT HIS COOPERATION HAD BEEN OF VALUE TO THE INVESTIGATION AND REFLECTED HIGHLY ON HIS SERVICE. RANARD RESPONDED THAT THIS WAS 6TH SESSION HE HAD ATTENDED AS WITNESS. THERE WERE MANY U.S. OFFICIALS HE THOUGHT WOULD HAVE INFORMATION ON THE LOBBYING ISSUE. THEY SHOULD ALL APPEAR FOR TESTIMONY ON THE RECORD. RANARD SAID HE THINKS THAT THE JUSTICE AGREEMENT TO OBTAIN TONGSUN PARK TESTIMONY IN THE U.S. WAS A "MISTAKE" AND HOPED THE SUBCOMMITTEE WOULD PROBE UNTIL EVERYTHING IS LAID OUT FOR PUBLIC VIEW SO THAT THE U.S.-KOREA RELATIONSHIP CAN BE PROPERLY EXAMINED IN TERMS OF OUR MUTUAL SECURITY INTEREST. VANCE

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